

INSECT ENCOUNTERS

2000

The USDA-ARS Center for Medical, Agricultural and Veterinary Entomology (CMAVE) participated with the UF Department of Entomology, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, APHIS, the Florida Beekeepers Association, and Disney Epcot in the Florida Entomological Society's Insect Encounters exhibit at the Florida State Fair, February 9-22, 2000, in Tampa Florida.

The ARS Gainesville Location EEO committee wishes to thank all who contributed to the CMAVE ant, fly, termite, and stored product insect displays, assisted in setup/take-down, or served as "expert" advisors, including Herve Bossin, Yazmin Cardoza, Eileen Carroll, Keira Dooley, Nancy Epsky, Everett Foreman, Miriam Hemphill, Jerry Hogsette, Paul Kendra, David Oi, Faith Oi, Dennis Shuman, Bernie Sparks, Alonso Suazo, Betty Weaver, and Frank Washington. Everything went well except for a problem with maintenance of the fire ant colony that we hope to work out for next year by better timing of our display visits.

We set up a questionnaire box to obtain feedback from the State Fair attendees. Nancy Epsky collected and organized the responses. Here is a short summary:

INSECT ENCOUNTERS - USDA EXHIBIT QUESTIONNAIRE

We worked hard this year to set up an exhibit that is interesting and educational. Please take a minute or two, tell us what you think about the exhibit, and put your comments in the suggestion box.

1. What did you like best about the exhibit?

Responses:

Info on USDA activity in the area
All very interesting and informative volunteers
Fruit fly detection people very professional
Sandra's answers to our many questions. Very interesting!

Holding the tarantula
The beagle
I really like the insects being shown alive
The exhibit was very educational. I recently moved here and was not aware of many of the issues presented. Great info - brochures. Thank you!
The whole exhibit was great
All the exhibits, live animals and great information
The dead insects displayed
Everything was very educational. We took fact sheets and school level materials (elem.). We spent more time here than anywhere else at the fair.

2. What would you recommend that we add next year?

More space!!
More personnel from USDA
More live specimens - maybe videos talking about each exhibit
You could add an interactive show
A butterfly cage to watch them grow and develop

3. Additional comments:

Enjoyed the displays. Two of us!!
Very nice - people had great stories and info
Great exhibit
Was very interesting! Thank you
Spiders very good
Keep up the wonderful work!
Thank you - it was extremely enjoyable
Very interesting! Thank you!
Staff were entertaining, helpful & very well informed. We thought this was the best exhibit at this year's fair (that we got to see)